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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/842,580	04/26/2001	Ichiro Fujieda	NECN 18.617	7454

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EXAMINER

QI, ZHI QIANG

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2871

DATE MAILED: 02/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/842,580

Applicant(s)

FUJIEDA, ICHIRO

Examiner

Mike Qi

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3. 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, in claim 4, recitation "the light emission area and the transparent area are arranged alternately in a first direction, the reflective members are arranged in a second direction, and the first direction and the second direction have a significant angle therebetween as viewed from the front" must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 7, 17 and 19 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 7, recitation "The LCD device as defined in claim 7" so that the claim 7 cannot be dependent to claim 7.

Claim 17, recitation "The method as defined in claim 17" so that the claim 17 cannot be dependent to claim 17.

Claim 19, recitation "The method as defined in claim 19" so that the claim 19 cannot be dependent to claim 19.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant admitted prior art.

Claim 1, Applicant admitted prior art discloses (page 1, line 13 – page 4, line 19; Fig.1) a conventional reflective type LCD having LCD unit (120) and a front light unit (110), and a plurality of reflective members (122).

Although the Applicant admitted prior art does not expressly disclose the front light unit having a light emission area and a transparent area, but the Applicant admitted prior art discloses (page 1, line 13 – page 4, line 19; Fig.1) that the light emitted from the light source (111) through the light guide (112) and following a variation in the course thereof at the reflective surface (112b) and the light irradiated onto the LCD unit (120) and the light passes through the polarizing plate (126), phase plate (125), transparent substrate (124), liquid crystal layer (123), then the light reflected from the reflective members (122) is transmitted from the LCD unit (120) toward the front light unit (110). Such that the front light unit (110) must have a light emission area to emit the light onto the LCD unit (120) and a transparent area to pass the light reflected from the light reflective members (122) of the LCD unit (120) toward the front side of the

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front light unit (110), and the reflective members (122) must be arranged in matrix according the active matrix structure.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to use front light unit and LCD unit as claimed in claim 1 for achieving bright and clear image display when the ambient light is dark or bright.

Claim 2, Applicant admitted prior art discloses (page 1, line 13 – page 4, line 19; Fig.1) that the light emitted from the light source (111) through the light guide (112) and following a variation in the course thereof at the reflective surface (112b) and the light irradiated onto the LCD unit (120), in which the variation course of the light guide (112) has the property of reflecting light at a front side as shown in Fig.1.

Claim 3, Applicant admitted prior art discloses (Fig.1) that the reflective members (122) are arranged in a pitch, and the light emission, transparent areas are arranged in another pitch which is an integral multiple of the reflective members pitch.

5. Claims 9, 4-8, 12 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant admitted prior art in view of US 6,025,894 (Shirasaki et al).

Claims 9 and 16, Applicant admitted prior art discloses (page 1, line 13 – page 4, line 19; Fig.1) a conventional reflective type LCD having LCD unit (120) and a front light unit (110), and a plurality of reflective members (122), and a transparent protective layer (113) in front of the front light unit (110).

Applicant admitted prior art does not expressly disclose the front light unit having a transparent electrode, an electroluminescent layer and a non-transparent electrode consecutively arranged as viewed toward a front side.

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However, it was common and known in the art to use electroluminescent (EL) as a surface light source. Because the EL light source using dielectric layer having phosphor powder between two conductive electrodes in which one is transparent, the other is non-transparent, and when a strong electric field applied, the phosphor would emit light using very little current. Shirasaki discloses (col.7, line 24 – col. 11, line 49; Fig.1) that a structure of an organic EL device (12) has a reflection cathode electrode (15) of a light-reflective metal (non-transparent) formed on a substrate (14) of glass and an anode electrode (19) of a transparent electrode material (e.g., ITO) having a transmission property to the outside light formed on the entire surface of the organic EL layer (18), so that the light is emitted by the organic EL device (12). Although the organic EL device (12) of Shirasaki is used as a back light for a LCD panel (13), but it would have been an obvious variation to use such EL device as a front light as long as the anode electrode (transparent electrode) would be arranged toward the LCD panel. Shirasaki indicates (col.11, lines 38 – 49) such organic EL device emits light with high luminance and exhibits a high transmission property with respect to light in a visible light's wavelength range.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange a front light unit having a transparent electrode, an electroluminescent layer (EL) and a non-transparent electrode as claimed in claims 9 and 16 to emit light to the LCD unit for achieving high transmission property with respect to light in a visible light's wavelength range and such EL front light would use very little current so as to suppress power consumption.

Claims 4-8, Shirasaki discloses (col.7, line 24 – col. 11, line 49; Fig.1) that a structure of an organic EL device (12) has a reflection cathode electrode (15) of a light-reflective metal (non-transparent) formed on a substrate (14) of glass and a anode electrode (19) of a transparent electrode material (e.g., ITO) having a transmission property to the outside light formed on the entire surface of the organic EL layer (18), and the reflection cathode electrode (15) (non-transparent) has a shape and area which matches the display area of the LCD panel (13), so as to display image. Although the organic EL device (12) of Shirasaki is used as a back light for a LCD panel (13), but it would have been an obvious variation to use such EL device as a front light as long as the anode electrode (transparent electrode) would be arranged toward the LCD panel.

Therefore, the non-transparent electrode such as the reflective electrode (15) must have a shape and area to match the display area (pixel area) of the LCD panel.

Normally, the pixel area is arranged in a mesh structure (in a matrix), so that the non-transparent electrodes (reflective electrodes) would have a mesh structure too. Such that the emission area (non-transparent or reflective electrodes) and the transparent area (passing light area) would be arranged alternately in a direction and the reflective members would be arranged in another direction, and the non-transparent electrodes (reflective electrode) would constitute light emission area having a plurality of emission sections and each emission section would be controlled separately according to the image signals, and that would have been at least obvious.

Claim 12, Applicant admitted prior art discloses (page 1, line 13 – page 4, line 19;

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Fig.1) a conventional reflective type LCD having LCD unit (120) and a front light unit (110), and a transparent protective member (113) mounts on the front light unit (110) for protecting the front light unit (110). Shirasaki discloses (col.7, line 24 – col. 11, line 49; Fig.1) that a structure of an organic EL device (12) has a reflection cathode electrode (15) of a light-reflective metal (non-transparent) formed on a substrate (14) of glass and a anode electrode (19) of a transparent electrode material (e.g., ITO) having a transmission property to the outside light formed on the entire surface of the organic EL layer (18), so that the light is emitted by the organic EL device (12). Although the organic EL device (12) of Shirasaki is used as a back light for a LCD panel (13), but it would have been an obvious variation to use such EL device as a front light as long as the anode electrode (transparent electrode) would be arranged toward the LCD panel. Therefore, using a transparent protective member disposed in front of the front light unit, and the transparent protective member would be mounted on the transparent electrode, the light emission layer (electroluminescent layer) and the non-transparent electrode, and that would have been at least obvious.

6. Claims 18 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,025,894 (Shirasaki et al).

Claim 18, Shirasaki discloses (col.7, line 24 – col. 11, line 49; Fig.1) that a structure of an organic EL device (12) has a reflection cathode electrode (15) of a light-reflective metal (non-transparent) formed on a substrate (14) of glass (functions as a transparent protective member) and an anode electrode (19) of a transparent electrode material (e.g., ITO) having a transmission property to the outside light formed

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on the entire surface of the organic EL layer (18) (the organic EL layer (18) formed between the reflective electrode (15) and the transparent electrode (19)), and the reflection cathode electrode (15) (non-transparent) has a shape and area which matches the display area of the LCD panel (13) so as to display image, and that the organic EL would be used as a back light unit as claimed in claim 18.

Claim 15, although the organic EL device (12) of Shirasaki is used as a back light for a LCD panel (13), but it would have been an obvious variation to use such EL device as a front light as long as the anode electrode (transparent electrode) would be arranged toward the LCD panel.

Shirasaki discloses (col.7, lines 37-39) that the non-transparent electrode such as the reflective electrode (15) has a shape and area to match the display area (pixel area) of the LCD panel. Normally, the pixel area is arranged in a mesh structure (in a matrix), so that the non-transparent electrodes (reflective electrodes) would have a mesh structure too, and that would have been at least obvious.

7. Claims 10-11,13-14, 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant admitted prior art and Shirasaki as applied to claims 9, 4-8, 12 above, and further in view of US 4,142,773 (Avramenko et al).

Claims 10, 13, 17 and 19, Applicant admitted prior art discloses (page 1, line 13 page 4, line 19; Fig.1) using transparent protective member (113) for protecting the front light unit (110), and it was common and known in the art as the space between the protective member and the front light unit is filled with an inert gas and the space between the LCD unit and the front light unit is filled with an inert gas. Because the

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space between the two optical components such as between the protective member and the front light unit or between the LCD unit and the front light unit (claim 19, according to the back light, the space would be between the back light unit, i.e., the transparent electrode of the back light unit, and the LCD unit) is filled with an inert gas, the two optical components would not be directly contacted each other. Avramenko indicates (col.15, line 66 – col.13, line 8; Fig.11) a same concept of the space such as the transparent flanges (54) are filled with an inert gas (argon) would reduce the effect of surrounding medium such as thermal and mechanical deformations.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to fill an inert gas into the space between the two optical components as claimed in claims 10, 13 and 19 for reducing the effect of surrounding medium such as thermal and mechanical deformations.

Claims 11 and 14, the limitations are only given weight as intended use as any display can be used in a cellular phone.

Conclusion


8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mike Qi whose telephone number is (703) 308-6213

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

Mike Qi
February 4, 2003


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